

WEB  
of  
MYSTERY

WEIRD! EERIE! STARTLING!

# WEB OF MYSTERY



K

ON THE GALLOWS I THREW  
A CURSE...EVERYONE WHO  
POSSESSES MY VIOLIN DIES  
A VIOLENT DEATH...AND  
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!



# "There's no such animal," he cried!



**M**<sup>r</sup> FATHER and I were picking the ponies one day when I started telling him about a *sure thing* I heard about.

"You say it pays four bucks for every three?" he asked.

"Yep," I replied.

"And can't lose? It automatically wins! Must be illegal!"

"Not a bit," I replied. "In fact, the government very much approves..."

"Our government approves of a horse who can't lose..."

"Who said anything about a horse?" I asked.

"So what else could it be but a horse..."

"It not only could be—but *is*—U. S. Savings Bonds," was my prompt reply. "The surest thing running on any track today."

"For every three dollars you invest in U. S. Savings Bonds you get four dollars back after only ten years. And if you're a member of the Payroll Savings Plan—which means you buy bonds automatically from your paycheck—that can amount to an awful lot of money when you're not looking. Hey, what are you doing?"

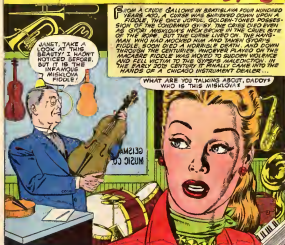
"Tearing up my racing form! The horse I'm betting on from now on is U. S. Savings Bonds."

**Automatic saving is sure saving—U. S. Savings Bonds**



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# Curse of the Condemned Gypsy



JANET, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS BEAUTY! I WOULDN'T NOTICED BEFORE, BUT IT IS THE INFAMOUS MISKLOVA FIDDLE!

FROM A CRUDE GALLONS BY BARTOLAMA FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO, A CURSE WAS SHIPPED DOWN UPON A FIDDLE. THE BACE JOWEL, GOLDEN-TONED POSSES- SION OF THE CONDEMNED BY THE CASE ALSO EVEN AS GYPSY MISKLOVA'S WHA BEFORE IN THE CASE BITE OF THE BONE. BUT THE CURSE LIVED ON. THE HANG- MAN WHO HAD HOOKED HIM AND TAKEN GYPSY'S FIDDLE, SOON DIED A HORRIBLE DEATH, AND DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES. HOWEVER PLAYED ON THE MACABRE FIDDLE WAS HOWED TO SUDDEN VIOLENCE AND FELL VICTIM TO THE GYPSY'S MALEDICTION. IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY IT FINALLY CAME INTO THE HANDS OF A CHICAGO INSTRUMENT DEALER...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, DADDY? WHO IS THIS MISKLOVA?

AS AN INSTRUMENT DEALER, GENSAR WAS QUITE FAMILIAR WITH THE FOLK LEGEND. JANET SMUGGLED WHEN SHE HEARD ITS BLOODY BACKGROUND...

DESTROY IT, DAD! IT'S TOO HORRIBLE FOR WORDS! IT FRIGHTENS ME!

NONSENSE, JANET! IT'S JUST A STORY! I WOULDN'T BELIEVE AN INANIMATE OBJECT COULD HAVE SUCH POWER! I WOULDN'T THINK OF DESTROYING ANYTHING SO BEAUTIFUL!

IT MAY BE JUST COINCIDENCE. AS YOU SAY, DADDY! BUT EVEN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS CAN BE DEADLY!

JANET, SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR! ANSWER IT, PLEASE!





AS FREDRICK PLAYED THE FIDDLE, MONSTROUS THOUGHTS FLOODED HIS BRAIN. HE THRILLED TO ITS EVIL POWER AND HIS BLOOD BOILED IN HIS TEMPLES.



A FRENZY SHOOK FREDRICK AS HIS FINGERS SUDDENLY CLUTCHED YRONIK'S THROAT!



I'VE RID OF YOU! HA! HA!



OH, HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE—  
WHAT HAVE I DONE? THAT  
CURSED FIDDLE! IT GAVE  
ME SUCH EVIL STRENGTH!  
MY HEAD'S REELING! I  
MUST GET AWAY!



THESE MEN!  
GET THE POLICE!  
HE'S THE  
KILLER!

THE MYSTERY HAS SURROUNDED!  
ALL ESCAPE ROUTES WERE BLOCKED!  
FIDDLE FLED TO THE ROOF...



THEY'LL  
NEVER  
GET ME!  
NOT  
ALIVE!

STOP, YOU FOOL!  
YOU CAN'T ESCAPE!  
SURRENDER, OR  
WE'LL SHOOT!

I SHOULD HAVE  
LISTENED TO  
JANET!  
BARETT!



A FEW DAYS LATER, THE MYSTERY FIDDLE  
HAD RETURNED TO GEISHMAR...



WE CHECKED AND  
FOUND THIS BELONGS  
TO YOU? I GUESS  
YOU HEARD ABOUT  
THE CASE!

Y-YES! HORRIBLE.  
WASN'T IT HE WAS  
GIFTED, BUT HE HAD  
A VIOLENT TEMPER!

PROMISE ME NOW  
YOU'LL DESTROY  
THE VIOLIN, DAD?  
DON'T SELL IT!  
WASN'T WHAT  
HAPPENED TO  
FIDDLE ENOUGH  
PROOF OF ITS  
EVIL!



JUST A COINCIDENCE, JANET!  
YOU FORGET FIDDLE HAD  
A VIOLENT TEMPER AND  
WAS TERRIBLY JEALOUS OF  
YOUNG! IT DIDN'T TAKE  
MUCH TO INFLAME HIS  
NATURED, ESPECIALLY  
AFTER HE LOST THE  
COMPETITION!

IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE GEISHMAR HAD ANOTHER  
CUSTOMER FOR HIS DIVINE INSTRUMENT...



GEISHMAR, MY OLD FRIEND, YOU  
WILL DO ME A FAVOR, WON'T  
YOU? THAT CLUMSY BEAR, WILDMACH,  
THE CONDUCTOR, KNOCKED  
DOWN MY PRECIOUS VIOLIN  
DURING THE REHEARSAL!  
LOOK, IT IS CRACKED,  
AND TOMORROW I AM  
SOLOIST!

I CAN'T RE-  
PAIR IT THAT  
FAST, SASHA,  
BUT I HAVE  
A GRAND  
FIDDLE YOU  
CAN USE UNTIL  
IT'S FIXED!

AHH, A BEAUTY! NOW  
CAN I EVER THANK  
YOU? THAT WILDMACH  
IS IMPOSSIBLE! HE  
KNOWS AS MUCH  
ABOUT MUSIC  
AS A PIG!



JUST RETURN IT AFTER  
THE CONCERT! I'LL  
HAVE YOURS FIXED  
BY THEN! AND  
TAKE IT EASY, SASHA!  
REMEMBER... YOUR  
TEMPER!

AT THE OFFER REHEARSAL OF THE DEBAY SYMPHONY SOCIETY...

STOP! STOP! WHAT KIND OF PLAYING IS THAT, SASHA? THIS IS THE LAST TIME I WARN YOU! YOU ARE PLAYING TOO LOUD!



EARLY SPREAD THROUGH SASHA'S BODY! THE VIOLIN'S TERROR COULDED THROUGH HIS VEINS LIKE AN EVIL POISON

YOU FAT PIG! THE ORCHESTRA IS DROWNING ME OUT! PEOPLE ARE NOT PAYING TO HEAR YOU... THEY ARE COMING TO HEAR ME!



AGE, I'LL SHOW YOU WHO'S INCOMPETENT, YOU FAT FOOL! THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU CONDUCT AN ORCHESTRA!

OH, HE'S CRAZY! STOP HIM! MY HEAD! OHW!



KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF OR YOU'LL GET THE SAME AS THAT FAT INSECTILE!

STOP HIM! SOME- BODY! HE'S KILLED WILDMACH! HE'S GONE CRAZY! STOP THE MAD MILLER!



WHAT HAVE I DONE? I MUST GET AWAY! THEY ARE LIKE MAD DOGS AFTER MY BLOOD!



STOP HIM! THE FRONT ENTRANCE! GUEY UP! STOP THE MADMAN!



HEY! LOOK OUT!

YIKES! AHHH!

AND AT THAT MOMENT!

WHY IT'S SASHA VARENSKY! DADDY'S OLD FRENCH! POOR MAN - HE WAS A GENIUS!



POOR MAN NOTHING! HE'S A MAD MILLER! HE JUST ASS- DERED WILDMACH WITH A MUSIC STAND!



BUT WHEN THE GYPSY FIDDLE HAS RETURNED TO GISHAR, HE DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO REMEMBER IT -









I WON'T LISTEN! I WON'T WAIT!  
BACK TO THE DUST... GHH...  
WHAT'S THAT?

NO... NO...  
YOU MUST  
NOT!



HA... WHO  
ARE  
YOU?  
I AM THE SPIRIT OF STON! HISHLOM  
HAD DIED UPON THE GALLOWS IN  
BRATISLAVA IN 1827! THEY STRUNG  
ME UP AND STOLE MY FIDDLE WHICH  
I USED TO PLAY SO WILDLY! BUT I  
CURSED THEM ALL! HA! HA!



DO NOT DESTROY MY FIDDLE!  
THE CURSE MUST NOT BE  
BROKEN! DOWN TO THE END  
OF TIME THE EVIL MUST  
CONTINUE! AS MY REVENGE  
GOES ON, ETERNALLY!

JANET... JANET!  
LET ME IN!  
WHAT'S  
WRONG?

EEEEEN!



JANET - ARE  
YOU ALL RIGHTS?  
I HEARD YOU  
SCREAM!

THE SPIRIT... LIKE A HUGE  
UGLY GEM... GYOS!  
HISHLOM... HE SPOKE  
TO ME... NOW HE'S GONE!  
NOW I KNOW WHAT  
I MUST DO!



THE EVIL VOLIN  
MUST BE DE-  
STROYED!  
LISTEN, DAD,  
DO YOU HEAR  
THOSE  
UNEASILY  
SOUNDS?

JANET, IT'S  
TRUE! THOSE  
HELLISH  
SCREAMS!

BOOHOO!  
GAAHOO!  
YEEHOO!



THERE, IT'S  
DONE! NOW  
HISHLOM  
CAN GO  
WHERE HE  
BELONGS -  
TO THE  
DEVIL!

TO THINK THAT  
EVIL COULD LIVE  
SO LONG IN THE  
SHAPE OF A  
BEAUTIFUL VOLIN!  
AND THE TRAIL  
OF HORROR IT  
HAS LEFT BEHIND  
IN THE WORLD!



GAD!  
LOOK  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENED!  
THE  
FIDDLE -  
CRUMBLING!  
IT'S  
GONE!

AND ONLY A  
PILE OF DUST  
REMAINS.  
LIKE AN AGED  
SKELETON  
CRUMBLING  
WHEN EXPOSED  
TO AIR!  
THE  
CURSE OF STON  
HISHLOM IS GONE  
FOREVER - WITH  
THE FIDDLE  
WHICH HOUSED  
HIS EVIL  
SPIRIT!

# TRUE TALES of UNEXPLAINED MYSTERY

'5

**S**HORTLY AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA, DON CARLOS RODRIGUEZ DE CASTRO, A SPANISH NOBLEMAN, WAS CONDEMNED AS A POLITICAL ENEMY OF SPAIN. HIS LANDS AND WEALTH WERE CONFISCATED BY THE CROWN, BUT RATHER THAN FACE AN UNJUST TRIAL, DE CASTRO FLED THE COUNTRY IN ONE OF HIS SHIPS...

LEARNING OF THE DEATH OF HIS FURRY AT THE HANDS OF THE KING, DE CASTRO VOWED VENGEANCE. ACROSS THE JOLLY BOGGER, HE INTERCEPTED MANY SPANISH VESSELS, KILLING AND LOOTING...



IT IS DE CASTRO... THE PIRATE!

KILL THEM ALL! LET NONE SURVIVE!

FINALLY CAPTURED AFTER MANY YEARS OF PIRACY, HE REFUSED TO SURRENDER HIS FABULOUS BOOTY, SO THAT HIS LIFE MIGHT BE SAVED...



MY PLUNDERED WEALTH IS SMALL, HOWEVER ROB THE BLASPHEMERS FROM ME! I PLACE A CURSE OF DEATH ON ANY WHO ATTEMPT TO REMOVE IT FROM ITS PLACE OF CONCEALMENT!

BUT SEVERAL YEARS AFTER DE CASTRO'S EXECUTION...



AYE, HATE! I WAS WITH DE CASTRO WHEN HE HID HIS LOOT... AND IT'S LONG PAST SINCE HIS HEAD FELL. I AM TO GET IT! ARE YOU WITH ME?

A KING'S RANSOM, YOU SAY! AYE... COUNT ME IN!

THE TWO FORMER PIRATES WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN, THEN, SEVERAL YEARS LATER...



RANCHO, LOOK! IT MUST BE THE DE CASTRO TREASURE!

SI! AND LOOK AT THOSE SKELETONS! THEY MUST HAVE FOUGHT OVER IT! BUT THE TREASURE IS OURS NOW... ISN'T IT?

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WHEN THE TWO PIRATEMEN DON'T RETURN, A SEARCHING PARTY WENT OUT...



THEY ARE DEAD! DECAYED! BUT HOW?

LOOK! OVER THERE! ... BY THIS CAVE! IT IS FILLED WITH TREASURE! IT MUST BE DE CASTRO'S!

ONE OF THE PEASANTS WAS DISPATCHED TO THE VILLAGE TO GET HELP. HE ALONE SURVIVED. IT CAN ONLY BE ASSURED THAT THE OTHERS PERISHED IN THIS MANNER...



WE WILL ALL BE RICH!

LISTEN! THAT NOISE! AN AVALANCHE! THE ENTRANCE IS BEING SEALED UP!

SO NATURALLY DID THE SLIDE COVER THE ENTRANCE THAT THE CAVE'S LOCATION COULD NEVER AGAIN BE FOUND. TO THIS DAY DE CASTRO'S TREASURE LIES UNCLAIMED IN A STORMY CAVE, WHO IT WERE CONSEQUENCE OR WAS IT DE CASTRO'S CURSE THAT RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF ALL ITS CLAIMANTS? HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN IT, READER?

THE END

# STRANGE POTION of Dr. Lorch



RICHARD LORCH WAS A SCIENTIST WHO TRIED TO DISTILL A POTION WHICH WOULD BE-SEGE TO GAIN THE POWER AND POWER HE HAD IN THE PRINCIPAL SEA OF MANNING WHEN HE WAS HALF DEAD, STRIPPED OF HIS NATURE, ANIMAL, AND A GOOD ENVIRONMENT. DR. LORCH ACHIEVED HIS GOALS, BUT THE PRICE OF THE POTION WAS HIGHER THAN HE HAD EXPECTED!

LATE ONE AFTERNOON, AT DR. RICHARD LORCH'S PRIVATE LABORATORY, LOCATED JUST OUTSIDE THE MID-WEST'S LARGEST CITY...

A MARVELOUS JOB OF DISTILLATION, THAT PERHAPS NOW I CAN CORRECT THE ERROR WHICH RESULTED SO MANY TIMES IN FAILURE!

LOOK, PROFESSOR, WHY DON'T YOU LET ME IN ON THIS SECRET?



SOME DAY YOU WILL KNOW, SECRET'S IS SOMEBODY REVEAL THE SECRET OF VITALITY KEEPING A SECRET FROM ME & MYSELF!



ONLY SOMEBODY AS UNIMPORTANT AS YOUR ECCENTRIC OLD DAD! AS FOR TED, IT'S NO SECRET HOW HE FEELS ABOUT YOU, MY DEAR!

BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE, ANNE!

THEY WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER, THOSE TWO, AND TED'S A BRILLIANT SCIENTIST!

YOUTH! TO INCREASE HUMAN LIFE-SPAN 80 YEARS! MERELY BY DRINKING A LIQUID...



TO RESTORE THE YOUTH AND SUPER-HUMAN STRENGTH MAN ENJOYED IN HIS PREMONITORIAL DREAM WHEN HE BATTLED THE SAME-YOUTH TIGER! TODAY! I SHALL TASTE SUCCESS OR FAILURE!



IMAGINE! YOUR DAD WORRIES ME, ANNE! IT'S THE SECRET FORMULA OF HIS. IT'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH INCREASING HUMAN STRENGTH, EXTENDING THE LIFE-SPAN...



"EACH TIME YOUR FATHER GETS A DISTILLATION, HE EXPERIMENTS ON ANIMALS. FIRST IT WAS RABBITS..."



"AFTER LAPPING UP THAT POISON, THOSE RABBITS BECAME SO DUMB AND FRIENDLY, BECAME FRIENDLY BEASTS FIGHTING EACH OTHER TO THE DEATH..."

"FOUR MONTHS LATER, AN IMPROVED DISTILLATION TURNED A DOMESTIC CAT INTO A MURDERER! THAT TIGER TO CLAW AND KILL EVERYTHING IN SIGHT!"

"LAST YEAR A DOG WHO DRANK THE LIQUID BECAME A BEAST BEAST WHO TORE ITS MASTER'S CAR APART AND HOWLED TELL IT BROKE! DEAD OF BRUXSTON!"



"THREE MONTHS AGO, YOU DAD DROD HIS MOST EFFICIENT SERIES OF A SPOON! THAT NIGHT, HE HEARD UNBENTLY SLEEPING FROM THE FRENCH DOOR HE KEEPS IN THE CELLAR."

"GREAT GUM! HE'S COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED! HE'S TURNED INTO A GORILLA!"

"GROWL!"



"IF I'D GOTTEN THERE TWO SECONDS LATER, YOU'D HAVE BEEN AN ORGASM..."

"FEOWERS!"



"IT HAS THE EFFECT OF A MIS-  
CALCULATION THAT WILL BE  
ELIMINATED IN THE NEXT  
MOMENT! NOBODY MUST  
HEAR OF THIS  
THING, TED!"

"OF COURSE  
DOCTOR!"

"B-BUT I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND  
NOW..."



"YOUR FATHER'S JUST MADE THE  
BUSH POTION - AND I STILL  
DON'T UNDERSTAND NOW! I'M  
VERY MUCH AFRAID OF WHAT  
MIGHT HAPPEN WHEN HE TRIES  
OUT THIS LAST SERUM!"

"WHAT'S DAD THINKING  
OFF? WHAT'S HE  
AFTER?"



"AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN THE  
PRIVACY OF DR. LOCH'S STUDY..."

"MY EXPERIMENTS HAVE WILD SUCCESS!  
MY FLUID IS SUITABLE FOR HUMAN  
BEINGS ONLY! THEREFORE, I MY-  
SELF SHALL DRINK...  
IT!"



"GROWN! TO-THE DRINK! IT'S GETTING  
ME ... (GASP) ...  
ASIDE!"



"A-HY THROAT! IT'S GETTING THICKER!  
(GROWL) MY HEAD!"



WITHIN MOMENTS, AN ASTONISHING TRANSFORMATION! THE CIVILIZED SCOTTISH BECAME BRUTISH! HIS EYES GREW SMALL AND FURROW, HIS TEETH GREY POINTED AND COARSE, HIS JAW PROTRUDED, HIS HEAD AND BACK BECAME MATTED WITH HAIR, HIS FISTS BECAME HAMMERS AND FOREARMS, AS HEIS!



HAPPY WAS THIS PRIMITIVE CIVIL-  
MAN GOING? WAS THIS CREATURE  
ACTIVATED ONLY BY INSTINCT,  
THE INSTINCT OF SELF-PRESERVATION,  
THE INSTINCT TO KILL AND KILL  
AGAIN?

NEAR THE ROAD HE SAW SOME-  
THING SPARKLING, A PRIMITIVE  
WOLF CLUB, WITH A MIGHTY  
WARRIOR, HE PLUCKED IT OUT OF  
ITS COMPLETE SETTING!



HE KEEN INSTINCT DETECTED THE  
SMELL OF GAME, HE PLUNGED  
INTO THE WOODS. AGAIN A  
BROOD HE SAW A DOG DRINK-  
ING STRAIGHTLY HE CROST UP  
ON IT, CAREFUL TO MAKE  
SURE THE WIND WAS BLOWING  
IN HIS DIRECTION!



THE HUNCHED DOG WHIMLED!  
BUT IT WAS TOO LATE...



GROG! HOWS IT THIS WHOLE  
COMING, JUNK, HARD TO  
TAKE OFF!





TRYING HIS BEST TO GET OUT OF FEAR AND HATED FOR ANYTHING THAT WAS ALIVE TO HIM, HE MOVED FORWARD WITH A SMILE OF RAGE.



THEN, THE BEAST WANDERED BACK THROUGH THE WOODS TO DR. LORCH'S STUDY - AND WITH A GIGAN OF INTENSE DILIGENCE, HE TOPPLED FORWARD - UNCONSCIOUS.



A HALF HOUR LATER, AS TED AND ANNE ENTERED DR. LORCH'S STUDY, A STRANGE TRANSFORMATION JUST ESCAPED THEIR NOTICE. THE CAVE MAN BECAME DR. LORCH.

TED: THAT SHATTERED DOOR! YOU'RE RIGHT! THOSE RIPPED CLOTHES - THE LUNATIC WAS HERE! HE WENT AFTER DAD!

YOUR'RE RIGHT! HERE'S HIS BLOOD-STAINED CLUB!

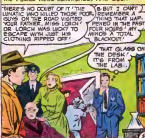


LATER THAT NIGHT, AS TED AND ANNE WERE RETURNING HOME



THE TWO MEN ARE DEAD - BUT NOT BY ACCIDENT! THEY WERE CLUBBED TO DEATH - BATTERED BEYOND RECOGNITION! THE POLICE THINK SOME LUNATIC OF SUPER-HUMAN STRENGTH RAN AWAY FROM AN ASYLUM!

THE POLICE WERE SUMMONED, AND SOON...



THERE'S NO DOUBT OF IT! THE LUNATIC WHO KILLED THOSE POOR GUYS ON THE ROAD VISITED YOUR FATHER, MISS LORCH. DR. LORCH WAS LIGHT TO ESCAPE WITH JUST HIS CLOTHING RIPPED OFF!

BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER A THING THAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST FOUR HOURS! MY MIND'S A TOTAL BLACKOUT!

THAT GLASS ON THE DESK! IT'S FROM THE LAB!



IT'S THE POTION!

DR. LORON - DID YOU DRINK ANY OF YOUR POTION TOMORITE? I FOUND THIS GLASS ON YOUR DESK!

NOT THAT I CAN REMEMBER, TED! IT'S AS IF I JUST CAME OUT OF A COMA!

AND MORRIS REMAINS THE JETTER EACH NIGHT THEREAFTER. DR. LORON COULDN'T FIGURE OUT THE NEXT DAY WHETHER HE HAD TASTED THE STRANGE MIXTURE...



I THINK I DRINK THE BLUR EVERY NIGHT AFTER TED, ANNE AND THE SERVANTS LEAVE. BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER THE NEXT DAY WHETHER I DID! I MUST TRY IT AGAIN!

ONCE AGAIN - FOR THE HUNDRETH TIME - THE HORRIBLE TRANSFORMATION TOOK PLACE - A TRANSFORMATION THE DOCTOR COULD NOT RECALL WHEN HE RESUMED HIS HUMAN SHAPE...



AGAIN THE SHYTH STUMBLED ACROSS SOME HUMAN BODIES... TWO BOTS CAMPING. AGAIN HIS PRIMITIVE INSTINCT OF HORROROUS MURDER WAS AROUSED...

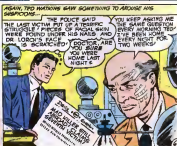


B-B-B-B LOOK!



BRIEF MOMENTS LATER...

URRRRRRR! GROWER!



AGAIN, TWO HUNDRETH WHY SOMETHING TO AROUSE HIS SUSPICIONS...

THE POLICE SAID THE LAST VICTIM PUT UP A TERRIFIC STRUGGLE - PIECES OF RACIAL SKIN WERE FOUND UNDER HIS NAILS AND DR. LORON'S BACK IS SCRATCHED!

DOCTOR, ARE YOU SURE YOU WERE HOME LAST NIGHT?

YOU KEEP ASKING ME THE SAME QUESTION EVERY MORNING, TED! I'VE BEEN HOME EVERY NIGHT FOR TWO WEEKS!





AND DON'T LIT  
ME WITH THAT  
ROCK!  
BOW!  
BOW!



THE NEXT NIGHT...  
BUT WHY DID HE  
SETTLE EARLY  
FROM OUR DATE.  
TED?

BECAUSE FOR  
SOME TIME I'VE  
BEEN SUSPECTING  
THAT THAT  
KILLER IS 'LOOK'  
ANNE!



THAT MONSTER, ANNE, THAT  
IS YOUR FATHER!  
IT'S THAT FORGON!  
HIS REPRESENTING  
ON HIMSELF!  
THAT'S MY  
FATHER!



THE SHOCKED COMES  
FOLLOWED THE BOMB...  
HE'S GOING TO THE  
CIRCLE GROUNDS!  
HE MUST BE AFTER ITS A  
SOME WILD  
GAME! COME  
IN THIS WAY.  
ANNE!



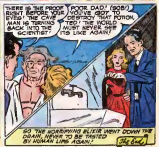
SUDDENLY, THE CAVE MAN PAINTED!  
LOOK! THAT GORILLA!  
IT'S OBEYING SOME  
PRIMORDIAL INSTINCT!  
HE SEEN A NATURAL  
ENEMY IN THE CAVE  
MAN! HE'S BREAKING  
LOOSE!



THE CAVE MAN, TOO, IS OBEDI-  
ING HIS GORILLA INSTINCT OF  
HIS SAVAGE NATURE - THE  
SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST!  
HE'S TAKING ON  
THE GORILLA!  
BOW! BOW!



FOR TEN MINUTES THE BATTLE RAGED!  
THEN SUDDENLY, WITH A SNAP OF HIS  
SPINE, THE GORILLA DROPPED DEAD!  
THE CAVE MAN IS DONE  
FOR, TOO! HE'S DYING.  
ANNE!  
BUT IS IT  
REALLY  
DAD?



THERE IS THE PROOF  
RIGHT BEFORE YOUR  
EYES! THE CAVE  
MAN IS TURNING  
BACK INTO THE  
SCIENTIST!  
POOR DAD! (GOD!)  
YOU'VE GOT TO  
DESTROY THAT FORGON,  
TED! THE WORLD  
WOULD NEVER SEE  
ITS LIKE AGAIN!

SO THE MORNINGMILLER WENT DOWN THE  
DRAIN, NEVER TO BE TESTED  
BY HUMAN LIFE AGAIN!

The End

# TRUE TALES of UNEXPLAINED MYSTERY

#6

IN 1943, MAJOR CARLTON FIELD OF ENGLISH INTELLIGENCE RETURNED TO LONDON FOLLOWING FAILURE ON A SECRET MISSION. IN HIS PRIVATE CLUB, SEVERAL OLD FRIENDS PROMPTED HIM TO REVEAL THE NATURE OF HIS TRIP...

COME, COME, CARLTON... WE'RE OLD FRIENDS. WE DESERVE NOT TO REVEAL A WORD!

OH, IT'S NOT SO MUCH THE SECRECY OF THE MATTER. IT'S JUST SO UNBELIEVABLE, THAT YOU'D CONSIDER ME A FOOL FOR THINKING YOU'D ACCEPT IT ALL AS TRUTH!

BUT INSISTENT LIONS FINALLY BROUGHT OUT MAJOR FIELD'S STORY...

I WAS SENT TO ISTANBUL TO LOCATE A MAN NAMED DRITHI FALAKAN. HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE IN POSSESSION OF SOME STRANGE SECRET THAT WOULD NOT ONLY POSSIBLY END THE WAR... BUT WOULD REVOLUTIONIZE THE ENTIRE WORLD!



"IT TOOK SEVERAL WEEKS, BUT I FINALLY LOCATED FALAKAN..."

NO, MAJOR... IT IS NOT LEGEND! I AM TRULY IN POSSESSION OF THIS REMARKABLE SECRET. THE SHINY POWERS ARE AFTER IT TOO, BUT I WILL NOT DEAL WITH THEM!

BUT JUST WHAT IS IT?



"APPARENTLY FALAKAN TRUSTED ME. HE LED ME THROUGH MANY DARK ALLEYS AND CROOKED STREETS, AND FINALLY TO HIS QUARTERS..."

THIS IS WHAT FORCE DE LEON WAS SEARCHING FOR, MAJOR? IT IS A RELAYING LIQUID? I EXPECT YOU TO DOUBT ME... BUT I AM 378 YEARS OLD!

W-WHAT?



"OF COURSE I DOUBTED HIM. WHAT PROOF WAS THERE?"

I CONDUCTED THIS LIQUID AT 42... THE AGE I LOOK NOW! IT TAKES MANY HOURS TO PREPARE. I MUST TAKE A STROGNADO DOZAGE EACH DAY TO REMAIN ALIVE AND WATCH OUT!

OWWW! IT SLIPPED!



"IN AN INSTANT FALAKAN BECAME A SAGING WILD BEAST!"

YOU FOOL! DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE? I MUST HAVE MY DAILY DOZAGE IMMEDIATELY OR I'LL REVERT TO THE FULL APPEARANCE OF MY 378 YEARS!

BUT... IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!



"SUDDENLY FALAKAN RELEASED HIS GRIP! HE COINED AND CHOKED FOR A SECOND AND THEN FELL AWAY! WHEN I RECOVERED MY FULL SENSE, I FOUND MYSELF LOOKING DOWN AT THE REMAINS OF A SKELETON NEARLY FOUR CENTURIES OLD!"



WHO CAN EXPLAIN THIS STRANGE INCIDENT? JUST ANOTHER UNEXPLAINED MYSTERY IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!

The End.

# THE FACE IN THE FOG

IT WAS FOUR O'CLOCK ON THE AFTERNOON OF DECEMBER TWENTY-FOUR. I WAITED IMPATIENTLY IN A LITTLE POD-BOUND AIR-FIELD IN OREGON WHERE AN ASAH PLANE THAT HAD GIVEN ME A FREE RIDE THIS FAR IN MY TRIP, HAD DROPPED ME OFF TO WAIT FOR A COMMERCIAL PASSENGER PLANE THAT WOULD TAKE ME ON TO SAN FRANCISCO...

BAD NEWS, LIEUTENANT WENDELL!

DON'T TELL ME THERE'S ANOTHER DELAY! I'VE GOT TO GET TO SAN FRANCISCO! MY WIFE IS IN THE HOSPITAL, AND I'VE GOT TO GET THERE!



A FEW MONTHS AFTER MY MARRIAGE TO LUCIA, I HAD BEEN SENT TO ALASKA ON ARMY DUTY. WE HAD DECIDED MY YOUNG WIFE SHOULD STAY IN SAN FRANCISCO UNTIL AFTER THE BIRTH OF OUR BABY. I HAD GOTTEN EARLY GENETIC LEAVE WHEN A CABLE INFORMED ME OUR BABY WAS ARRIVING PREMATURELY AND THAT LUCIA WAS IN A CRITICAL CONDITION...

IT'S MORE THAN A DELAY, I'M AFRAID! WE'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT THE PASSENGER PLANE FROM SEATTLE THAT WAS TO PICK YOU UP HERE COULDN'T GET IN THE FOG NEAR MT. RAINEER.

THAT'S AWFUL!



I WAS SHOCKED AT THE NEWS AND I HESITATED WITHOUT CONSIDERING FOR ALL THOSE POOR SOULS WHO HAD CRASHED. BUT I FELT THAT MY DUTY WAS TO THE LIVING... MY BELOVED LUCIA!

THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER PLANE I CAN GET! MAYBE I CAN HIRE A PRIVATE PLANE, BUT I MUST GET TO SAN FRANCISCO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

I'M SORRY, BUT ALL PLANES ARE GROUNDING UNTIL THE FOG LIFTS. THAT MAY BE HOURS... OR DAYS!



I KNEW HOW hopeless it was AND YET I COULDN'T LEAVE THE FIELD. IT WAS ALMOST AS THOUGH I EXPECTED SOME KIND OF HELP TO COME OUT OF THE FOG...



SOMEHOW I'VE GOT TO GET THERE! I'VE GOT TO GET TO LUCA! SHE NEEDS ME!

SUDDENLY I ALMOST RAN INTO A MAN STANDING BESIDE ONE OF THE SMALL PLANES. IN THE FOG HE LOOKED GHOSTLY AND UNREAL. HE WORE THE UNIFORM OF A COMMERCIAL PILOT...



OH, ROBERT! I ALMOST RAN INTO YOU!

IT'S HARD TO SEE IN THE FOG!

HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT WILL LAST? I'M WALKING AROUND TO KEEP FROM GOING HURT! THEY TELL ME EVERYTHING'S GROUNDING AND I'VE GOT TO GET TO SAN FRANCISCO!



I'M NOT GROUNDING! I'LL TAKE YOU!

I DIDN'T STOP TO ASK QUESTIONS OR FIGURE IT OUT! ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS THAT THERE WAS MY CHANCE TO GET TO LUCA...



WELL, YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A PASSENGER AT YOUR OWN PRICE! WHERE'S YOUR PLANE?

THIS CUB IS MY PERSONAL PLANE. I'VE BEEN PILOTING THE BIG COMMERCIAL PASSENGER PLANES AND I'VE ALWAYS LEFT ANYONE ELSE HERE BETWEEN EARS! GET IN!



THIS IS LIVE THE ANSWER TO A PRAYER FOR ME! I'VE WILLING TO RISK ANYTHING TO GET TO MY WIFE WHO IS IN A TIGHT SPOT RIGHT NOW! I'M WONDERING IF I HAVE A RIGHT TO ASK YOU TO TAKE A CHANCE IN THIS KIND OF WEATHER. THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO RISK YOUR HECK!



NOTHING CAN HAPPEN TO ME NOW, BUDDY. AND I'LL SEE THAT NOTHING HAPPENS TO YOU! I HAD A TOUGH FLIGHT A WHILE AGO, BUT THAT'S OVER!

YOU'VE CERTAINLY GOT CONTROL OF YOUR PLANE! I SCARCELY REALIZED WE HAD LEFT THE GROUND! AND IN THIS "SOUP" TOO! WHY, THERE'S NO VISIBILITY AT ALL!



OH, I WAS ALWAYS A FLYING FOOL! BUT THE BEST OF US SLIP UP AT TIMES! IT'S NICE TO REACH THE POINT WHERE FOG DOESN'T MATTER... THEN YOU'RE REALLY FLYING!



THAT WAS THE TROUBLE  
BETWEEN MY GIRL AND ME  
SHE'EN ALWAYS SAID I  
LOVED FLYING MORE  
THAN I LOVED HER.  
MAYBE SHE WAS  
RIGHT...

I DON'T  
THINK  
YOU  
MEAN  
THAT!



WELL, IT'S TOO LATE NOW, AND MAYBE  
THAT'S JUST AS WELL, TOO! THERE'S  
ANOTHER GUY WHO'S BEEN HANGING  
AROUND HER, AND WITH HER OUT OF  
THE PICTURE SHE'LL MEET HIM AND  
HAVE THE KIND OF SECURITY  
SHE WANTS!

SUDDENLY I HAD A FEELING OF STRANGENESS  
ABOUT THIS MAN WHO WAS IN FRONT OF ME  
THROUGHOUT THE DRIVE. I HAD BEEN TOO  
WRAPPED UP IN MY OWN ANXIETY TO NOTICE  
IT BEFORE, BUT THERE WAS A HOLLOW,  
IMPERSONAL TONELESSNESS TO HIS VOICE  
AS HE CONTINUED...



THE ONLY THING IS— I DON'T WANT  
SHE'EN TO HAVE ANY SECRETS  
ABOUT ME!



YOU MEAN YOU AND  
YOUR GIRL HAVE  
BUSTED UP AND  
YOU'VE DECIDED  
NOT TO DO ANY-  
THING ABOUT IT!

THE DECISION ISN'T IN MY  
HANDS ANY MORE! I GUESS  
IT'S ALL RIGHT, IT HAS TO BE.  
PEOPLE GO ON, DOING THE  
THINGS THEY'RE ALWAYS  
WANTED TO DO!



YOU'RE QUITE A  
PHILOSOPHER!  
BY THE WAY, WE  
HAVEN'T GOTTEN  
AROUND TO  
NAMES YET.  
I'M JOHN  
WENDELL...

I'M BOB  
FERDMAND.  
THERE'S SAM  
FRANCISCO  
DOWN THERE.  
I'LL HAVE YOU  
LANDED IN  
A JIFFY!

*IN spite of the fog, he  
landed at the San  
Francisco Municipal  
Airport so smoothly  
that I scarcely knew  
when we were down.*



YOU'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT  
THIS MEANS TO ME!



HOW  
MUCH  
DO I  
OWE  
YOU?

I CAN'T USE THE  
MONEY NOW, LIEU-  
TENANT! BEHOLD,  
I SORT OF OWED  
YOU THAT TUP!



OWED ME A TRIP I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

YOU WERE ON MY PASSENGER LIST. I WAS SUPPOSED TO LAND AT THAT AIRPORT IN OREGON AND PICK YOU UP. THEY GAVE ME YOUR NAME IN SEATTLE...



THEN THEY MUST HAVE HAD ME BOOKED ON TWO FLIGHTS, BECAUSE THE PLANE THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO PICK ME UP CRASHED OVER AN OCEAN! BESIDES, YOU WERE ALREADY AT THE OREGON AIRPORT...

SNIP IT IT HNT IMPORTANT



I KNOW YOU'RE IN A HURRY TO GET TO YOUR WIFE, SO I WON'T KEEP YOU. BESIDES, I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME MYSELF. I'M DUE BACK WHERE I BELONG, BUT YOU COULD DO ME A FAVOR...

WHY OF COURSE!



YOU'LL FIND EILEEN'S ADDRESS IN THE PHONE BOOK IF YOU FORGET IT... MISS EILEEN EVANS ON BUTTE STREET. TELL HER THAT YOU SAW BOB, AND THAT HE'S STILL FLYING AND HE'S HAPPY AND THAT HE WANTS HER TO BE, TOO!



TELL HER MIKE IS A GOOD GUY AND SHE SHOULD MARRY HIM AND BE HAPPY!

OKAY, BUT I HOPE YOU'RE NOT MAKING A MISTAKE!



NO MORE MISTAKES FOR ME, LIEUTENANT! I'M FAST THAT! SO LONG!

GOOD-BY, AND AGAIN, MY URGING GRATITUDE!



EVEN AS I SPOKE, THE FOG SEEMED TO CLOSE AROUND HIM AND I COULDN'T SEE HIM ANY MORE...

HE--HE'S GONE!

AS I HURLED ACROSS THE  
FIELD, I COULDN'T SHED  
OFF THE FEELING THAT THERE  
WAS SOMETHING STRANGE  
ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE, BUT  
MOST OF MY THOUGHTS LAY  
AROUND, NOT IN LOGIC!

IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR BOB  
FERDINAND, WHOEVER HE IS,  
I WOULDN'T BE HERE! I  
HOPE I'M IN TIME!



STANFORD-LANE  
HOSPITAL, PLEASE —  
IN A HURRY!

YES,  
SIR!



NOT MUCH BUSINESS AT THE AIRPORT  
TODAY. NO PLANES FLYING. BAD FOG  
ALL OVER THE PACIFIC COAST. TOO  
BAD ABOUT THAT PLANE THAT  
CRASHED INTO THE MOUNTAIN  
LAST A CHANCE OF NOBODY  
SUBMIT. THEY ALREADY  
FOUND THE FLIGHT BOOK,  
FELLA NAMED...

PLEASE  
HURRY,  
DEVER!



CAN'T DRIVE  
NO FASTER  
IN THIS FOG!

FUNNY THING ABOUT  
BOB FERDINAND GIVING  
ME THAT MESSAGE  
FOR THAT GUY. WHY  
DIDN'T HE WRITE HERE?



THEN, THOUGHTS OF BOB FERDINAND LEFT MY MIND  
AGAIN AS I REACHED MY DESTINATION...

IT WAS PRETTY SERIOUS FOR A WHILE.  
LT WENDELL, YOUR WIFE HAD A CLOSE  
CALL. BUT SHE'S FINE NOW, AND HAS  
A SURPRISE FOR YOU!



WELL, MY  
DARLING'S  
GOT HERE  
AS SOON AS  
I COULD!

OH, JOHNNY! EVERYTHING  
IS ALL RIGHT NOW! AND I  
HAVE A PRESENT FOR  
YOU! OUR LITTLE  
DAUGHTER WAS  
BORN LAST NIGHT!



AUSN'T TIRE THE PATIENT,  
LIEUTENANT. YOU MAY SEE  
HER AGAIN TOMORROW.  
AND YOU CAN HAVE A  
LOOK AT THE BABY  
BEFORE YOU GO.

GOOD  
NIGHT,  
JOHNNY  
DARLING!

GOOD  
NIGHT,  
HONEY!



AFTER A FROUD KISS AT MY NEW DAUGHTER, I FELT A STRANGE URGENCY TO GET MY PRO-  
MISED BRAND FOR BOB FERDINAND OFF  
MY MIND...

IT WENT TOO LATE TO GO AND  
SEE THAT GIRL TONIGHT, AND  
SOMEHOW, I'LL FEEL BETTER  
AFTER I'VE DONE IT. IT'S A  
FUNNY THING TO ASK ANOTHER  
MAN TO DO, BUT IT'S THE ONLY  
WAY I CAN REPAY HIM!



YES, HERE SHE IS ALL RIGHT... MISS ELSIE  
EVANS, AND THE NUMBER ON BUTTER STREET.  
I'LL GET A CAB AND GO OUT THERE. I WANT  
THE SORT OF MESSAGE YOU WANT TO GIVE  
OVER THE TELEPHONE!



A SHORT WHILE LATER...

I'M SORT OF ANXIOUS TO SEE  
THE GIRL AND HEAR WHAT  
SHE HAS TO SAY ABOUT  
BOB FERDINAND.



IT'S THE GIRL WHO OPENED  
THE DOOR WHO WAS  
CRYING...

MISS  
EVANS?

YES... WHAT IS  
IT, PLEASE?



MY NAME IS  
JOHN WENDELL.  
I MET A FRIEND  
OF YOURS TODAY,  
AND HE ASKED  
ME TO GIVE YOU  
A MESSAGE...

I-- I'M SORRY I--  
I JUST DON'T FEEL  
LIKE TALKING TO  
ANYONE! I'VE  
JUST HAD SOME  
VERY BAD NEWS!



I'M VERY SORRY TO HEAR  
IT. I WON'T TAKE UP MUCH  
OF YOUR TIME. IT WAS A  
VERY SHORT MESSAGE  
FROM BOB FERDINAND.  
HE WANTED ME TO  
TELL YOU...

BOB FERDINAND? OH--  
OH-- COME  
IN, PLEASE!



I WAS GROUNDED IN OREGON, PRACTICALLY  
TRYING TO GET A PLANE TO SAN FRANCISCO.  
THE PLANE I WAS TO HAVE CAUGHT CRASHED  
IN WASHINGTON. LUCKY I RAN INTO BOB  
FERDINAND AND HE BROUGHT ME HERE...





THERE WAS SOMEBODY IN THE EYES OF THE GUY RACING ME...

THERE'S SOME MISTRANS! YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLY HAVE SEEN BOB!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, MISS EWANS. I ASSURE YOU BOB FREDMAN GAVE ME A VERY PERSONAL MESSAGE FOR YOU!

HE ASKED ME TO TELL YOU THAT I HAD SEEN HIM, THAT HE'S STILL LIVING, AND THAT HE'S HAPPY AND WANTS YOU TO BE, TOO. HE SAID TO TELL YOU HE'S A GOOD GUY AND YOU SHOULD MARRY HIM AND BE HAPPY!

LIEUTENANT WRENELL, WHEN-- WHEN DID YOU GIVE YOU THIS MESSAGE?

WELL, WE LEFT OREGON ABOUT FOUR O'CLOCK AND MADE VERY GOOD TIME. IN SPITE OF THE FOG, WE LANDED IN SAN FRANCISCO A COUPLE OF HOURS AGO...

THIS MUST BE SOME MONSTROUS MISTAKE OR HORRIBLE JOKE! BOB FREDMAN WAS THE PILOT OF THE PLANE THAT CRASHED TODAY! THEY-- THEY HAVE ALREADY FOUND HIS BODY AND IDENTIFIED IT! HE CRASHED AT THREE O'CLOCK THIS AFTERNOON!

THE ACCOUNT WAS IN THE EVENING PAPERS. ALSO THE AERO COMPANY CONFIRMED IT OVER THE TELEPHONE WHEN I CALLED THEM.

THAT IS THE MAN! HE PICKED ME UP AT FIVE O'CLOCK AND FLEW ME HERE IN HIS CUB PLANE!

I SWEAR IT'S THE TRUTH, MISS EWANS! THIS MAN PICKED ME UP AN HOUR AFTER HE CRASHED AND ASKED ME TO DELIVER THAT MESSAGE!

THAT-- WOULD BE LIKE BOB! WE-- WE ALWAYS QUARRELED ABOUT HIS JOB. I WANTED HIM TO STOP FLYING. I TOLD HIM IF HE DIDN'T, I'D MARRY HIM! THEN TODAY, WHEN I HEARD ABOUT HIM, I-- I WAS SORRY!

SUDDENLY, WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO EXPLAIN IT, I KNEW THAT BOB FREDMAN'S SPIRIT HAD FLOWN ME TO SAN FRANCISCO...

PERHAPS THAT'S WHY BOB'S SPIRIT HAD REMAINED ON EARTH A WHILE LONGER, MISS EWANS. HE HAD THIS JOB TO DO. HE HAD TO GET ME TO MY DESTINATION, AND HE WANTED ME TO STOP BEING SORRY-- TO FIND HAPPINESS IN LIVING!

I'M NOT TRYING TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED. I'M JUST SPEAKING THAT IT DID HAPPEN! I HAVE TOLD NO ONE OF MY EXPERIENCE BUT MY WIFE AND A FEW OTHERS, BECAUSE I KNOW HOW UNBELIEVABLE IT SEEMS. THE NEWS PAPERS PLAYED UP THE STORY OF BOB FREDMAN'S OWN LITTLE PLANE. AT THE TIME HE CRASHED IT WAS AT THE FIELD IN OREGON WHERE HE ALWAYS LEFT IT. IT WAS FOUND THAT CHENKAS WAS AT THE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT IN SAN FRANCISCO. BECAUSE I MIGHT SAY I FLEW IT THERE, I NEVER FLEW A PLANE. I NEVER KNEW BOB FREDMAN IN LIFE. I MET HIM THAT NIGHT WHEN I FLEW WITH HIM, ONE HOUR AFTER HIS DEATH!

# VALLEY of LIVING DEAD

With the sun of that last day creeping behind a bloodshot mountain rim, we stood on a ledge overlooking *Ah-lar-m*.

"*Dae!*" came from Zarate's lips. "*Dae, i'* green purpose we have carved through to reach this spot. But it is over, the trail open—simple to rescue with *i'* riches we shall find here."

He was silent. He and Jenks and Wollem. And I glimpsed the hint of greed twinkling in their eyes. Yet awp and uneasiness came to them, too.

"*Ah-lar-m*," Jenks whispered uncertainly beneath his breath. "*Ah-lar-m*. Valley of Living Dead. Why? Bloody strange. I don't like it. I don't. Like a gaping mouth with teeth bared, drooling saliva."

And so it seemed. That barren slash set in the stark tropic growth of the surrounding hills. Those dead, reddish cliffs, like lips rimming a gullet, and jagged rocks like straggled, yellowish teeth projecting from a bare clay floor along which foamed a single stream. And strange half-glimpsed mounds of clay.

"We do not camp. We go on!" Zarate rasped. He spoke fiercely, as if drunk.

And when I glanced at him, thinking of the folly of forcing our way into the Valley at night, I said nothing. He was indeed drunk—drunk with visions of the riches ahead.

I gave thanks for one thing that night: for the moon which soon rose and lighted those long hours down the perilous ledge to the Valley. A moment's delay on my part, and I would have been left behind, dead upon the trail. For good last was sweeping the three on, goading them at a hurried pace down the rocky incline.

There, where the rocky trail met the valley floor Zarate paused, turned upon me, black eyes boring into mine.

"Miguel, we leave you here, safely bound until we return. Reflect upon it. If you have lied to us; if this is not *Ah-lar-m*—pray! You will soon wish yourself dead. For we will see to it that you die slowly. Paying for your lies . . ."

Long hours that night I writhed upon the rocky earth, striving despite aching weariness to loosen the things which cramped my arms behind me. No sleep came to me. How could it! My lone chance to escape was that night—the one time when the vigilance of the three had relaxed.

Now and again I glimpsed the three shadowy forms in the distance beyond clumps of gnarly brush, looking their way along the stream bed, stooping, searching, pawing furiously through the water-edge gravel.

Diamonds. The moon's sharp rays set them to glimmer redly in the weeds. Incredible the number those three plucked from the gravelly stream that night.

And to my ears came sounds of their voices lifted in drunken foray from their finds.

Once, helms clutched tightly in his hands, Jenks hurried past me toward the packs, found there a jar sack into which he poured a glowering hoard. He dropped sack and contents carelessly aside and turned in a half run back to the stream. Scrambling across my outstretched legs, he went on, blind to my entreat.

My eyes followed him, weaving his way past the queer heaps of clay which dotted the Valley. Those mounds! In the moonlight they might have been blanketed forms. The Englishman had huddled of them in his delirium. And at the memory, thoughts of tomorrow hurried in my mind.

Escape! Somehow I must. I felt the raw ache of my wrists chafed from my struggles to free them. My efforts redoubled.

Painfully I worried my body along the ground until justfied none ripped beneath my shoulder. Twisting about, I managed to catch the arm linkings upon rock teeth.

Agns passed those ten hours. The moon rolled down the sky and reached for one black western peak. Once I caught the sound of gravel patter down the steep incline above me. Pausing, breathless, I thought of my captors. But again I glimpsed them far down the Valley, and above me the trail was silent.

Once more with gritted teeth I forced the stubborn things against the blunt rock, working unavailingly, gnawing my heels until they grew sticky with blood and grime.

Fairer dawn came with the bonds yielding. Then the paling sky spread light across the Valley's mounds, coloring, outlining them until I read in their forms the crude likenesses of men and apes. Sprawled as if frozen while striving to escape some fearful fate.

And as I looked, the hair on my neck bristled. The clay belly of one had moved! Moved as if something were forcing its way out—

What shall I say? How shall I explain the horror I knew that mound contained. It needs the words of a sane man. A scientist who has observed and studied less incredible things in the world outside. Yet I, too, had observed. I had seen the rapacious diseases of movable organisms, the mutable blood-lust of jaguar, the ruthlessness of all jungle life.

And vividly I recalled certain unaccustomed-looking objects like clay thumbtacks upon jungle trees—the work of the vicious hunting wasp, cradle of its larvae. I had seen that wasp stalk its prey, hovering above a creeping insect grub. Then dart down, burrowing the victim's nerve cord with poison sting, paralyzing it, meticulously depositing an egg upon its abdomen. And last, completing its deadly task—welling egg and living victim in a cocoon of clay.

Egg became larva and larva fed upon immobile grub. Carefully, by instinct. For by some diabolic miracle the prey lived on. And continued to live while the larvae gnawed within it, until only an undevoured shell remained and the larvae, transferred to a wasp, broke from the clay wall and emerged.

Such had I seen before. But these in *Ab-lar-ar* the mounds were no tiny dabs of clay made by common wasps. They contained no grubs of insects. Instead, I know what they held! The Jackson gray apes: the unsuspecting natives who had crept into the Valley!

And the winged horrors which would stir with the coming sun? *Devil!*

Frantic, musing, my lashed wrist, I did not hear the step behind, only the voice which caught me back from madness:

"Mike! Mike!"

Twisting about, I saw him. Rugged, suggesting from taut-weathered, a crimson scar from Zarate's bullet farrowing his temple. But alive!

"Sefior Rod—"

Gladden shook my throat. Then I saw his glance lift beyond me, and it died away. I heard the rustle of brush, the rasp of Zarate speaking.

"Eh, *señor*, please to remain with *Z*. I dream I hold it most dangerous."

Tense, Sefior Rod stood and stared. Little muscles of despair twitched about his lips.

"So, *amigo*, you are not dead?" Zarate continued mockingly. "I must choke myself. My arm is regrettable. My first bullet should have hit between a' eye. However, with this meeting I console myself. Indeed, this morning I have been most mistaken. There is a handsome diamonds, which we find, which Wollens and Jerks still hunt. With them I am charmed."

"Also there is Miguel. For some time I observe his struggles, while he is too engrossed to see me in a bush. And I have amused myself. I wager he will loosen his bonds before sunset. Then, as he sit up, I place a bullet in his gullet. Alas, he still wiggles, helpless on his back. And with you here a' wager cannot continue. I must dispatch him now! And you, *señor*. You, too, as well—"

Deliberately Zarate paused, considered my taut body. In that moment I felt the things give behind me. Somehow I thought my hope from my face, relaxed, slumped back upon my wrist.

Gravel crunched. Zarate loomed above me, lips mocking my failure. A last time my arm moved. Cords snapped at my wrist. My arm arched out, caught at Zarate's legs.

Startled, off balance, Zarate sprang back, stumbled, half went to his knees. His thundering gun swung on me. Then Sefior Rod had hurried past, swept beneath the warring automaton. He crashed into Zarate, spun with him in a mad tangle to the ground.

Too swift to describe, those split-seconds Zarate's weapon slipping from his grasp, clattering along the gravel; and I, fingers desperately tagging things from still-bound legs.

Then I was free. With Sefior Rod and Zarate lurching to their feet, I dived for the previous firearm. It was in my hand, half raised, when Zarate saw me.

Four punched his face, as he whirled, broke from Sefior Rod's clutch and ran. He never heard the frantic hail which came from Sefior Rod.

For an instant I thought Sefior Rod would follow; but at his first step I was at his side, gripping his arm.

"*Amigo*," I said levelly, "you are an admirable sentimentalist. By some miracle you hope to save your enemies from *Ab-lar-ar*. Impossible! They are doomed. We ourselves have little time left. So believe me, *amigo*, one step to rescue those pitiful humans, and I will put a bullet through your skull. *Better this merciful death than to remain in Ab-lar-ar alive!*"

With pointed gun I gestured. "*Look!*"

Already the sun's early rays had begun to wake the Valley. Upon the now shattered mound of clay crept a thing of horror—sulphurous yellow, its evil wings spanning the length of a pond, translucent, vibrating in the sun.

The gun in my hand cracked. The winged monstrosity half rose, arched itself, then spun about on the ground.

Then a far-off savage droning reached us, pulsed on our ears. Across the valley floor other sulphureous shapes were rising, darting through the air, circling three distant figures.

"*Devil!*" Sefior Rod breathed.

One winged demon had swooped down, clung a moment to the back of the huge, fleeing Wollens. Wollens had halted as if frozen, his knees buckling under him. Another shape clung to the back of the lank Jerks. A third's wings were enveloping Zarate. One instant Zarate's arms flailed madly, the next, they dropped to his sides and he toppled forward...

Never in our long furious climb from *Ab-lar-ar* did Sefior Rod turn his eyes back. White, shaken from what he had seen, he kept his face turned absolutely toward General. Not even the fortune of apes in the firm sack, the sack which Jerks had filled that previous night and which I had caught up as we fled the Valley—not even that could force thought of the morning from his mind.

And only one last glance did I cast back. When we reached the rocky ledge high above *Ab-lar-ar*, I halted a moment and turned. Far below I glimpsed those winged Furies, shaping three fresh mounds of clay.

In that space I recalled the bloody India, dangling lifeless by his thumbs. I recalled those other poor captives dropping before Zarate's merciless lead. And somehow, the sight of the three mounds below made me feel as if a huge invisible scale were slowly tipping back, righting itself, reaching an equilibrium...

THE END

# the Persevering Mummy

**D**RAMOND WAS NO ORDINARY MAN. OSIRIS, THE EGYPTIAN GOD WHO RAISES THE DEAD, COULD NEVER GET PAST DRAMOND'S MARVELOUSLY SEALED COFFIN TO BRING THE PERSEVERING HORRORER. IN FACT, DRAMOND'S ANGER HELD GOOD FOR 5,000 YEARS. THEN CAME A DAY OF RECKONING — A DAY MARKED WITH BLOOD, DEATH AND REVENGE — AND IN A PLACE VERY FAR FROM THE TOMB AT LUXOR!



SMILE ALL YOU LIKE, BOGER. DRAMID BELIEVED HE COULDN'T DIE! READ THOSE HEROCYPTIC! HE WHO OPENS MY COFFIN SHALL PAY FOR IT WITH HIS LIFE - SO THAT I MIGHT LIVE AGAIN HIS LIFE SHALL BE EXCHANGED FOR MINE!



YOU DON'T BELIEVE THAT BURN, DO YOU?

I DON'T BELIEVE IN THE SUPERNATURAL ANY MORE THAN YOU DO! THESE POPPYCOCK EGYPTIAN BELIEFS ARE SO MUCH POPPYCOCK FIT FOR BARBARISM! BACK TO WORK! I WANT THIS TOMB SET UP BY NIGHTFALL!



OKAY, PROFESSOR!

AND SO, FAR FROM THE BARGE OF THE SACRED Nile, FAR FROM ITS ORIGINAL SECRET BURYING PLACE IN LUGGY, THE TOMB OF DRAMID IS NOW RECONSTRUCTED THROUGH THE LONG AFTERNOON...



THEY SAY NOBODY DARED OPEN THIS CHARACTER'S COFFIN! BEHOLD HE PUT A WHAMMIE ON IT! WHOEVER OPENED IT WOULD CROAK!

THE PROFESSOR'S ASSISTANTS WOULD GIVE A MONTH'S PAY TO OPEN IT, CURSE OR NO CURSE!

EARLY THAT EVENING

THEN IT'S ALMOST ALL ASSEMBLED! FINE, BOGER! THE NIGHT CREW WILL REPORT WITHIN AN HOUR. SO GO ON WITH THE JOB! I'LL BE UP PRESENTLY!



MAY I INTERLOP?

I HEARD YOU JUST RECEIVED A NEW SHIPMENT FROM THE LOWER Nile. MY NAME IS NAWIN BASCHID. I'M ATTACHED TO THE DOYFRAH CONSULAR STAFF IN TOWN.



AND YOU CAME TO SEE THE TOMB OF DRAMID, IS IT?

I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME TO SEE IT! I HEAR THE TOMB HAS MANY WONDERS - NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS DRAMID'S CLAIM TO COME ALIVE THE MOMENT SOMEBODY OPENS HIS COFFIN!



FOR WHICH THE INTRUDER MUST PAY THE SUPREME PENALTY - DEATH! DID YOU EVER HEAR OF SUCH MONUMENTAL FOOLISHNESS?

YOU - AN EMINENT EGYPTOLOGIST - MAKING FUN OF ANCIENT BELIEFS?



COME, COME, BASCHID! THOSE BELIEFS WERE SUPERSTITIONS - WITCHCRAFT! WE ARE LOGICAL MEN - SCIENTISTS!







MINUTES LATER

I JUST CALLED THE POLICE. PROFESSOR ORDNEY!

GOOD! NOW THAT THE ELECTRIC CURRENT'S BEEN TURNED ON, NOBODY CAN GET IN OR OUT—EXCEPT BY MY PERMISSION!



I MUST BE CAREFUL! THOSE WEAPONS OF THEIRS ARE AS DANGEROUS AS MY MAGIC! THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY! TO BETTER HIDE! THAT EMPTY SARCOPHAGUS!

IF YOU SEE ANYTHING—CALL OUT!



HEY, MIKE! I'VE GOT A HUNCH THAT GROOM ISN'T HERE!

THAT'S IT, FOOL. COME CLOSER. CLOSER.



MIKE! MIKE! ARGHH-H!

BANG! BANG!



ED! WHERE ARE YOU? WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER! PROFESSOR ORDNEY—QUICK! ED'S IN TROUBLE!



HE'S DEAD, THE FOOL! BUT HE'S DONE! HIS WORK! THEY'RE ALL AROUND ME! WAIT! A STAIRCASE—LEADING TO THE BASEMENT!

WHILE WE POKE AROUND IN THE DARK, THE YELLER COULD BE ESCAPING! WHY DOESN'T THAT IDIOT GUARD CALL OUT?

DID IT EVER OCCUR TO YOU, PROFESSOR, THAT HE MAY BE DEAD?







AFTER THE DR. DIME DRAMID'S BURNING BREATH THE GUARDS AND WORKERS CHASED STEPPED OVER THE BODY OF PROFESSOR ORDINE...



## WIN CASH PRIZES!

All you have to do is write a letter of 150 words or less and tell us which story you liked best, which you liked second best and which you liked third best, and why.

1st PRIZE . . . . .	\$15.00
2nd PRIZE . . . . .	5.00
3rd PRIZE . . . . .	3.00
4th PRIZE . . . . .	2.00

Follow these rules carefully—and your letter may be a prize winner! Letters to be no longer than 150 words; give your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice of stories in the magazine; give your name, address, and age; tell us what other magazines you read regularly. The judges' decision will be final. Duplicate awards will be made in case of ties. All entries must be postmarked no later than **MAY 2, 1951**.

Address: Contest Editor, **WEB OF MYSTERY**

23 W. 47th St., New York 19

# Goose? or Nest?

## WHICH WILL YOU HAVE ?

For some reason, the goose egg stands for zero . . . nothing.

The nest egg, however, stands for a tidy sum of money, set aside for your own or your children's future.

It's hardly necessary to ask you which you'd prefer.

But it is necessary to ask yourself what you are doing to make sure you don't end up with a goose egg instead of a nest egg ten years from now.

The simple, easy, and obvious thing to do is to buy U. S. Savings Bonds.

Buy them regularly, automatically, on a

plan that pays for them out of the month-to-month income you make today.

Millions of Americans have adopted this practically painless way to save up a nice nest egg for the needs and wants of the future.

In 10 years they get back \$40 for every \$30 invested in U. S. Savings Bonds—bonds as safe and solid as the Statue of Liberty.

There's a special Savings Bond Plan for you. Ask your employer or banker about it today . . . and get started now.

You'll soon realize it's one of the most important and comforting things you ever did!

## Automatic saving is sure saving — U.S. Savings Bonds



*Contributed by this magazine in co-operation with the Magazine Publishers of America as a public service.*

# HAVE A SLIMMER, YOUTHFUL, FEMININE APPEARANCE INSTANTLY!



The entire girth of your posture built from muscles (muscles power!) The UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT is the newest, most comfortable girth I ever had.

adjust the belt and

## YOUR APPEARANCE! LOOK AND FEEL LIKE SIXTEEN AGAIN!

Don't look old before your time. Be as thousands of others do, wear a comfortable, new and improved UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT! The UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT with the amazing new adjustable front panel instantly gives you the way you want it, with added support where you need it most. Simply PRESTO! your old posture is reshaped, your back is bowed and you look and feel younger!

## MORE UP-LIFT AND HOLD-IN POWER!

The UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT takes weight off tired feet and gives you a more alluring, more strongly feminine, curvaceous figure the instant you put it on. It gives you lovely curves just in the right places, with no unsightly bulges in the wrong ones. It reshapes your waist line to suit your own unique shape you may now have. It's easily adjusted—always comfortable!

## TEST THE ADJUST-O-BELT UP-LIFT PRINCIPLE WITH YOUR OWN HANDS

Clasp your hands over your abdomen, press upwards and in gently, but firmly. You feel better don't you! That's just what the UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT does for you only the ADJUST-O-BELT does it better. Mail Coupon and test it at home for 10 days FREE at our expense!



You will look like and feel like this beautiful model in your size and line. Personal Reg. 1173. Adjust-O-Belt.

## APPEAR SLIMMER, AND FEEL BETTER!

The UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT fits and flows snugly, comfortably, quickly, easily. It adjusts easily to changes in your figure, you no longer rock your body. It gives instant slenderizing figure control. It fashionably shapes your figure to fit thousand lines. Like magic the UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT shapes your every wish. Pounds and inches seem to disappear instantly from waist, hips and thighs. You can adjust it to your slimmest shape as your figure changes. It gives the same fit and comfort you get from a made to order girdle costing 2 to 3 times the price. It washes like a dream. Suits Pansy and Regulus. Colors, nude and white. It's made of the finest stretch material used in any girdle with a pure wool front panel and made by the most skilled craftsmen. It's light in weight but powerfully strong.

It won't roll up, bulge or cut in the top. It gives extra-double support where you need it most. No other girth at any price can give you better support, you made you look better, feel better or appear slimmer. Shows 20 to 40 lbs.

ONLY.....\$4.98

... 10-DAY FREE TRIAL

## Money-Back Guarantee With a 10-Day FREE TRIAL

If the UP-LIFT ADJUST-O-BELT isn't better than any support you ever had, if You don't feel more comfortable, if you don't look and feel younger, if your shape isn't 100% IMPROVED, if you are not delighted with it, return it and your money will be refunded in full.

**FREE:** "SECRETS OF SLIMNESS" booklet tells how to take advantage of correct choice of clothes, proper use of make-up and other secrets to help you look years younger, pounds and inches slimmer, will be included FREE with your order.

## SEND NO MONEY

ADJUST-O-BELT CO., Inc., 100  
210 Madison St., Newark, New Jersey

Send your name and address, through ADJUST-O-BELT CO., to the  
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